FABLE

Tales of Albion

Part I

Fragments of the Old Kingdom

Reign of the Court

Legend has it that, when the world was young, Albion was a peaceful land full of tranquility and beauty. Then three came from the Void: the Knight, the Queen, and the Jack of Blades. They coveted Albion and demanded that all men bow down before them.

When the people refused, the Court burned Albion until the earth turned black and the sky was thick with smoke. Then the Court demanded obedience again, only to be refused a second time. This time the Court lifted the sea into the sky and flooded the world.

A third time the Court demanded that men worship them, promising peace and an end to the misery. Those who survived still refused. So the Court twisted their minds

until brother slew brother, parents abandoned their children, and friend turned against friend.

Finally, the people of Albion bowed to the Court. They and their descendants toiled to raise monuments to those who came from the Void.

Birth of William Black

In the days when the people still suffered under the Court's cruelty, a humble blacksmith and his wife had a boy. They named him William Black, and he would become the key to saving Albion.

Little is known about William's youth. As a grown man, he amazed others with the powers of his mind, by which he was able to protect his village and perform feats that a dozen other men could not equal. These acts came to be celebrated as the "Powers of Will".

William grew obsessed with the Court, determined to find a way to overthrow it. One night, while consulting a mysterious tome, he was suddenly transported from Albion into the Void. Here he met Jack, who sat on a throne surrounded by ghastly figures. Jack tried to enslave William with the powers of an ornate sword, but William fought

back and managed to steal the sword before escaping the netherworld.

Back in Albion, the sword spoke to William. It called itself the Sword of Aeons, and it promised to help him defeat the Court—but only if William offered his soul in bondage.

With the Sword of Aeons, William set off to find the Court.

Fall of the Court

William scaled the peak of Ruon, Albion's highest mountain, and challenged the Court to combat. The Knight of Blades appeared first and, wielding the Sword of Aeons, William destroyed him completely.

Next the Jack of Blades appeared. They fiercely struck at one another until William broke Jack's body. Some say that Jack was not truly slain, and that his soul escaped to the void.

The Queen of Blades was the last to face William. For weeks their battle raged across Albion. Mountains were raised and valleys were formed by their mighty blows. At last, William slew the Queen and freed the people from

their yoke. They acclaimed William, who now took the title Archon, as their king.

Rise of Albion

Once he had vanquished the Court, the Archon set his mind to unifying Albion into a great kingdom. His powers of Will were so great that it seemed the world reshaped itself in accordance with his wishes. Cities were built in a week's time, and marvellous machines were constructed that ran on will alone. Through a thousand years of peace, Albion reigned as the greatest centre of commerce and philosophy the world had ever known

But without an enemy to vanquish, the Archon's children grew petty and cruel. They called themselves Heroes and used their powers of Will to terrorise the people. A younger Archon might have stopped them, but his battle with the Queen and his time in the Void had infected his body and mind with a wasting illness. Faced with this decay, William wrapped his body in golden mail and a royal blue cloak before vanishing.

Thus began the corruption of the Kingdom.

Fall of the Kingdom

When the Archon vanished, Albion descended into chaos. Three out of every four people were slain in the wars or died from disease or starvation. Meanwhile, the Archon's many descendants vied for power.

These new rulers were not as kind or wise as the first. Each new Archon, fearful of a coup, brought fresh tyranny to Albion. A massive wall was constructed around the city, to keep citizens in and beasts and undesirables out.

The Archons' personal guard, who were encased in armour from birth, enforced their harsh decrees: no citizens were allowed out after nightfall, every citizen must appear when an alarm bell sounded, and any who opposed the Archon's rule were killed along with their families. The people witnessed these cruelties from behind masks that signalled their status while concealing their fear.

When the Kingdom had grown to its greatest extent, the Archon demanded that an immense tower be built to focus Will. Just after it was completed, the sky was filled with a sudden bright light, and all Albion shook. In the morning the tower was gone and the Old Kingdom lay in ruins. All its people were gone except for those who lived beyond the walls.

Darkest Times

After the fall of the Old Kingdom, the few villages that survived the destruction of the Spire fell into isolation. Distance bred suspicion, which grew into bloodshed. Villagers fought for food, land, livestock and fresh water. Soon, they were fighting even over women of child-bearing age.

Mercenaries sold their swords to the highest bidder and fought in a series of petty squabbles. If the mercenaries didn't like the price being offered, they extracted payment by threatening the villagers.

But this was not the darkest time for Albion. The Fallow Wars, and age of darkness and blood, would bring Albion to the edge of extinction.

World's End

Human scavengers poked through the ruins of the Old Kingdom. What they found they did not understand, and priceless artefacts were cast aside or traded as trinkets. Finally the forest grew over the ruins, and it was as if the rich heritage of Old Albion had never been. The population

dwindled, and those who survived would awaken each day to a darker world.

It seemed there was no safe haven. Hope faded as bandits stole and murdered with impunity. The people, starving, scoured the land for food and fresh water, but as the years passed there was less of each to find. Crazed prophets preached that the end of the world was at hand.

Then, out of the east, hope arrived in the most unexpected form. A bandit and mercenary by the name of Nostro came forth, pledging to bring peace and prosperity to Albion.

Rise of Nostro

In his youth, Nostro was a bandit and a mercenary driven by an ambition to leave his mark on the world. He was not without a sense of decency, but he did not reach his full potential until he met a wise old man named Scythe. Scythe was a wraith of a man, wizened and stern. He carried an ornate sword and shrouded himself in a tattered blue cloak that hid tarnished golden armour. He seemingly appeared out of nowhere and took a profound interest in Nostro.

Scythe saw in Nostro something more than a mere bandit. He sensed that Nostro unknowingly possessed the power that all the Archon's descendants shared. Scythe hatched a plan: if he could properly guide Nostro, this bandit could achieve great things. He might even unite Albion and undo the damage done by the first Archon and his children.

And so Scythe began to teach Nostro how to be a leader of men.

Albion Reborn

Following Scythe's counsel, Nostro set about returning security and prosperity to Albion.

First he gathered men and women from throughout Albion and founded a Guild where they could train to become true Heroes. Meanwhile Scythe tutored Nostro in the ways of the Will. Using his new-found power, along with Scythe's sage counsel, Nostro gathered an army and forced peace on the warring peoples of Albion.

For a time, it seemed that Albion might return to its former greatness. Those hopes were in vain.

Fall of Nostro

While the Guild was taking shape, Nostro commissioned a number of other great creations. One was the Witchwood Arena, intended to be a venue in which anyone could settle disputes in public. At the same time, Nostro's smiths forged a sword known as the Tears of Avo, patterned on reports of the Sword of Aeons, which had been lost with the Archon's disappearance.

Despite Scythe's teachings, Nostro increasingly fell under the sway of a power-hungry courtesan named Magdalena. In time, she corrupted Nostro to the point where the Arena was debased into a source of popular entertainment and the Heroes' Guild became nothing more than a house of mercenaries driven by lust for profit and fame.

These developments disgusted Scythe, who could only watch as Nostro and the Guild fell into disrepute. Finally he vanished, leaving Nostro to his fate.

Death of Nostro

Near the end of his life, Nostro could finally see how power had corrupted him, and how far short he had fallen of his youthful ideas. By then his followers and even his wife had

long since abandoned him. Isolated, he was easy prey for an assassin who slipped poison into his food.

Nostro knew that he was dying. He called out for Scythe, and his old mentor came to sit vigil with him in his final hours. Scythe with warm affection told Nostro of the good things had done in his life. Finally, at peace with himself, Nostro died with the dawn's first light.

Scythe disappeared shortly thereafter. Some say that, to this day, he wanders Albion alone, seeking another who bears the power to restore Albion to greatness.

Aftermath

After Nostro's death, Albion continued to grow and thrive, as did the Heroes' Guild.

The Guild came to be led by a succession of Will users, who individually varied from well-meaning to cruel in their intentions. The Guild itself adopted a simple code: complete the quest to the letter, ask for payment up front, and obey the local law enforcement unless a Hero is on a quest. The Heroes who graduated from the Guild were at times admired and feared by the populace they served.

As for Magdalena, she went on to wed a series of husbands. Her children used their mother's connection

with Nostro to establish hereditary power for themselves over Bowerstone.

Part II

Fall of the Heroes

Graduation Day

Today I graduate from the Heroes' Guild. My wife gave me this journal so I can capture my thoughts and record my adventures.

The graduation was to be in the Chamber of Fate. Instead—and rightly so, I think—it was in the courtyard memorialising those Heroes who died when Jack attacked Albion. I was so young then. When the Hero emerged from the fight. I was watching from the crowd. He defined what a Hero was: strong, resolute, and brave. I told my father I would be a Hero. He tried to talk me out of it, but I left for the Guild a few days later.

I tried everything to be noticed. I cleaned practice arenas. I fetched apples. I delivered supplies from

Bowerstone, where I met my future wife. Finally the Guildmaster approached me and asked why I wanted to be a Hero. I told him I wanted to help Albion. My parents were apprehensive, but the Guildmaster spoke with them, and they relented: I could begin Guild training. For years I learned everything I could. Now those labours are over, and my real work has begun.

Back from Oakvale

Back from a quest in Oakvale, where I dealt with a group of pirates. It's strange that bandits on land are reviled, while those on sea make women swoon. It was exciting to visit the birthplace of the Jack-slayer.

I wish I could say I enjoyed Oakvale. I was walking toward the tavern when a rock struck me in the back of the head. I turned to see who threw it, but no one was looking at me. Later, the tavern owner explained that some people don't respect Heroes anymore. A couple of years back, around harvest, another Hero came through, got drunk, and set fire to a row of houses. Heroes haven't been welcome since then.

Not everyone was cold to me. Some, mostly shopkeepers, were eager for my gold, and a married couple

with family in the Guild invited me to their home for dinner. But the animosity from the others is something I never expected. I still believe that Heroes are well regarded by most people. Surely the others will come around in time.

Happy news: soon I'll be a father. My Training didn't prepare me for this.

Father is Ill

Returned to the Guild for work and a reunion with my wife. More troubles on the way: I came across a crowd listening to a man shouting slanders against the Guild. Others handed out leaflets saying that Heroes are worse than outlaws, that we think we're above the law.

I talked to a few in the crowd. A shopkeeper from Knothole Glade told me about a Hero who robbed her. A traveling merchant showed me his scars from when a Hero failed to protect him on a trip to Barrow Fields. With Jack gone, people say there is no need for Heroes. I reminded them that most Heroes serve others, but all I got was angry words in return.

One merchant was hawking the oddest invention: a hand cannon that fires a small lead ball. Many people were interested, but no buyers. This "fire-arm" is far too

expensive for villagers. I don't imagine that much will come of it.

When I met my wife at Bowerstone, I met also with sad news: my father is gravely ill. Tomorrow we head to Gibbet Woods to see him.

Death and Life

My father has died. His passing was peaceful; he'd been sick since last harvest. My wife helped Mother while I spent days by my father's side.

Father told me how worried he was. He has seen a growing resentment of Heroes. The villagers think the guards never took strong enough action against Heroes known to be dishonest. Eventually, my father said, people will have their fill of Heroes. That was why he didn't want me at the Guild. Mother told me later that Father stood up for me when others, even old friends, spoke out against Heroes.

I am seeing more of those firearms on villagers' belts as of late.

We buried Father on the small hill behind the house. He handled his death just like in the tales, when Nostro, with

Scythe by his side, was calm and content in the face of death.

In mourning, we greeted a new life: my wife gave birth to a beautiful, healthy daughter. If only her grandfather could have held her.

Worrying and Waiting

I am frustrated by the way the Guildmaster has handled the disrespect for Heroes. Months have passed and still he refuses to step in. He reassures us that this will pass. Heroes, he says, have been following their destiny to good or evil for decades, and people never complained before... at least not this loudly.

I can't tell what he is thinking. He seemed so wise when I first started here. He's more cautious now. A few Heroes are eager to slit throats; the rest of us are trying to hold them back.

With the threat of violence at Bowerstone, I have arranged for my wife and daughter to stay here. They are both shaken by what is happening. My wife has lost friends because I'm a Hero. She wants to know what I'll do to stop this. I have no answers.

At least they're safe. They're sleeping now, but lately I've found it hard to sleep. A couple other Heroes have said they feel like the walls are closing in. I feel something else, as if the whole world is set to explode.

All Gone

The Guild is lost. This morning, a group of traveling Heroes ventured through Bowerstone, unaware of the recent unrest. Fighting broke out and the Guildmaster sent us to calm matters. We were too late. Bodies were everywhere. Only two Heroes stumbled to us. We were tending to their wounds when the mob returned, firing pistols and carrying torches.

We fell back to the Guild with the mob on our heels. Before we knew it, they had breached the Guild's doors. Most of us hesitated to attack the people we had sworn to protect. The mob saw our hesitation and cut through us without mercy.

The last of us fled into the woods, hoping to escape under the cover of darkness. Behind us, the Guild was engulfed in flames. The mob celebrated by firing their guns in the air.

I sent my wife and daughter off to my mother's farm. The look in my wife's eyes—was it fear? Loneliness? Anger? Now I am alone. The fire still burns where I once lived, trained, and dreamed. It is all gone.

Still Running

A year now since the Guild was burned, and I am still running. News of what happened has affected every village I have seen. When I visit a new place, when I pass a group of villagers or enter a tavern, I feel them watching me. I feel them sizing me up. I travel in disguise. What worries me the most is the merchants and shopkeepers. They have pristine memories. I make sure never to cross paths with any who might know me from before.

After the Guild fell, I left off from writing in this journal. Now, though, I feel a new compulsion to record what has taken place. I also shall start using pages to write to you, my dear wife. My next task will be to find someone I can trust to get these messages to you.

I know you and my father worried about my being a Hero. I know you must think your worst fears have come true, but this will pass. Heroes have been around for centuries.

I'll write when I can. I dream of you and our daughter. Kiss her for me.

A Winter Without You

My wife, I hope this message finds you and our daughter well. It has been another winter without you both. I feel hollow.

I made it to Knothole Glade after hiding near Witchwood Lake for the winter. I've been working as a day labourer, fixing homes and building new settlements. The Arena... it made me sick when I saw it. They use it now to execute Heroes. Some fight for their lives, but their bodies always end up on the pyre. When I smelled the smoke it was like the Guild was burning all over again.

There's little to stop criminals from attacking smaller towns. One night, a gang of bandits attacked the Glade. If you could have seen me—it was like old times. I cut them down in the blink of an eye. When the sun came up, the villagers came out of hiding and thanked me with knives and fists. Before I could protest, they were pelting me with rocks. I couldn't bear to fight them, but I knew they would skin me if they could.

I am hunted again. I shall write when I find safe haven.

In Hiding

My love, I'm on Hook Coast. For months I have been dodging the anti-Hero crowds. They seem to be everywhere. In fact, I entered Hook Coast just a day after another mob swept through.

They have taken to killing anyone who resembles a Hero. I have heard stories of people denouncing their rivals as Heroes, with a will for revenge or perhaps to remove suspicion from themselves.

For almost two years now, I have watched the people of Albion slaughter Heroes and turn on each other. At first I felt sorry for them; they were caught in their own ignorance. Now, I feel as if I have been misled by my own naivety. My father saw the anger growing among the populace more clearly than I could.

I have not heard from you. I have sent each letter by three messengers, in the hopes that one would reach you. Please give our daughter my love. Now more than ever, make sure she does not reveal her abilities. A Hero's blood flows in her veins. The mob must never learn that.

Reduced to Theft

I am still on Hook Coast, though a mob of Hero hunters has recently arrived. Their numbers are smaller than before. Perhaps they are just a scouting party. I have cut my hair and changed my clothes. I've pawned my bow, but I have almost no money.

I have been reduced to theft. I travel along the shoreline, stealing clothes from laundry lines and fruit from orchards. I am ashamed of what I do to survive. My behaviour is unworthy of a Hero, and it's the sort of thing for which I would punish others. At night, I can hear mobs in the distance, and wonder if they are coming to punish me.

I miss you both so much. I can only imagine what life is like for you back home. To my horror, I discovered my messengers' bodies strung up in trees, a "Hero Worshipper" banner wrapped around their corpses.

Now I am out of hope. This will not pass until we are all dead. I am heading north.

A New Home

No sign of hunters for months. Perhaps they're unwilling to follow as far as Snowspire. Even in midsummer, the air is

crisp. For all the cold and snow, I feel at home. This is where the Jack-slayer vanquished Jack in his final form.

I have a job unloading crates from the mainland ferries. I sold some of my gear and bought warm clothes. The harbourmaster has rented me a small shack just outside Snowspire. There's little to do here, but, after the past few years, I prefer the quiet. I have learned to fish. It brings me a measure of peace and puts food on my table. I've been dreaming more as of late. In my dreams I see a time, long after we are all dead, when Heroes will return. I can't see the new Heroes' faces, but I can see our legacy carried forward. I am at peace.

The people here are not suspicious of Heroes hiding in their midst, so I can send this directly to you. Come as soon as you can. Bring our daughter. There is a future for her here. There is a place for all of us. I wait for you.

Discovered

Very weak now. The mob found me. I was fishing by the river when I was ambushed by some scouts. They shot their rifles at me, hit me on my left side. It burns like fire.

Back in the cabin now. Torches are hitting the roof. Smoke. They're taunting me. I'm in the cellar. Dark and

damp. I can smell the sea even through the smoke. Cellar window is dirty but I can see them. Some have masks, some wear helmets.

I thought I saw you out there, my love. But no. My mind plays tricks. You would never shout those hateful things. You would never lead the mob to my door. Would you?

Oh, my beautiful baby girl. I had hoped to see you again. Now they've taken everything from me. But I still believe. The world needs Heroes, just not this one. I'm not afraid anymore.

They've broken through the door. It won't be long.

Part III

Travels in Today's Albion

Echo Mine

This locale is a bit of a mystery. Once an active mine, access to most of its inner chambers has been sealed off by a door assembled from assorted wood planks, almost as if it were hastily constructed to keep someone out—or something in.

Oakfield Demon Door

No living stone portal has ever been so lovelorn. Claiming that none have known a love so pure, it asks for a remembrance of happier times. As of yet, the door has not found anything that satisfies its romantic requirements.

Ritual Cave

This place is sacred to the Temple of Light because it plays a vital part in the Golden Oak ritual that maintains Oakfield's lush beauty. Temple acolytes attest that it is home to the Wellspring of Light, a potent water source that flows throughout Oakfield. As a result, this place is off limits to everyone but those few chosen by the Temple.

Temple of Shadows

Depending on your point of view, this is either the worst place in Albion or a delightfully depraved theme park. The morbidly curious will be chilled to the bone when they cross the bridge from Rookridge to their mountaintop destination, which has been perversely crafted to look like a cathedral. Cornelius Grim's club caters to wealthy clients who enjoy the occasional bit of evil. The entrance requirements are a closely guarded secret, but rumour has it that terrible and ghastly acts are involved. Friday is poker night.

The Wellspring

Few venture inside this cave due to the foul stench that exuded from its walls. No one knows what causes the awful odour, and most people who catch a whiff don't want to know. Although the community is eager to rid itself of the loathsome reek, none have had the fortitude to trace it back to its source.

Rookridge Demon Door

This sentient stone façade believes that the world is boring. After thousands of years, it has seen it all... well, all the boring stuff, anyway. If you seek entry, be prepared to provide the door with some light entertainment.

Gemstone Grotto

An abundance of what can only be described as crystal shrubbery breaks up the otherwise dank atmosphere of this cavern. The crystals amplify the light shed by a luminous fungus, which turns what would be just another hole in the ground into a glittering experience. Of course, getting here is difficult, and something might try to eat your legs, but the trip is worth the risk.

Hobbe Cave

As you might have guessed from the name, this cave is packed with filthy, odious Hobbes. Nervous locals claim that, when not eating raw flesh or biting random passersby, they steal children. This cave would be exactly the sort of a place for such gruesome goings-on. Entering the cave is not recommended unless you have a very good reason.

Old Town

In the shadow of the towering Fairfax Castle, Bowerstone's destitute struggle to survive. Small-time merchants and vendors fight to make deals, while the poor look for their next meal. Various criminal elements infest Old Town and employ the downtrodden as cheap labour. Ultimately, this working-poor neighbourhood could rise to new prosperity or descend further into ruin.

Bowerstone Cemetery

This sprawling estate is where the living pay their respects to the dead. You can find tributes both great and small: mausoleums the size of houses and tombstones with epitaphs too worn to decipher. If you can get past the idea

that you are surrounded by the dead, the cemetery is an impressive experience. Take a moment to review the tombstones and learn about Bowerstone's former inhabitants.

Bowerstone Cemetery Demon Door

Located just beyond the cemetery's entrance, this growling stone edifice is hungry. Very hungry.

Shelley Crypt

Located in the Bowerstone Cemetery, this cave is a macabre place filled with shredded banners, menacing statues, crumbling walls and steps, and a scene out of a torture victim's nightmares. According to legend, there is treasure hidden away in the depths. After entering the cemetery, take the low road and then make a right at a broken iron fence. When you hear insults and see piles of junk, you're close to your destination.

Fairfax Castle and Gardens

Built hundreds of years ago, the castle—now in the hands of the Fairfax family—looms over Bowerstone like a

sentinel. Those who witnessed the interior of the castle in its glory days describe the opulence of the grand rooms with awe and wonder. However, most of the rooms have become desolate since the death of Lucien Fairfax's wife, Lady Fairfax, and their daughter Amelia. Lucien is little seen in Bowestone these days, and he is believed to be holed up in his study. Visitors to Bowerstone should take time to tour the lovely Fairfax Gardens, located on the castle grounds.

Fairfax Tomb

The Fairfax family has been prominent in Bowerstone for generations, and this is where its members are interred after they depart this life. As with Fairfax Castle, few have discovered the tomb's secrets. The entrance to the tomb is locked, but there are rumours that a second entry point may be found in Bowerstone cemetery.

Lady Grey's Tomb

Scholars and history buffs might recall the Lady Grey scandal five centuries ago. The then Bowerstone mayor, Lady Elvira Grey, is said to have been involved in the

untimely death of a member of her own family, along with other scandals.

Bowerstone Demon Door

This living stone door is tucked away in Fairfax Gardens and claims that it is the oldest Demon Door in all of creation. Be warned: it is quite unfriendly and refuses to open for anyone.

Bowerstone Market

Passing across the bridge over River Bower, travellers find themselves in Bowerstone's bustling economic centre. During the day, the air is filled with the sound of stall vendors hawking their wares, the shouts of the Town Crier, and the hammering of the local blacksmith. Those with an eye for profit may buy and sell goods to the local merchants, invest in local real estate, or even work in the booming blacksmith trade. For a quieter experience, travellers are advised to enjoy a drink in the local tavern before they continue on to Old Town or Fairfax Castle.

Bower Lake Tomb and Hero Hill

Both of these landmarks can be found in the middle of Bower Lake. The larger of the two, a hill rumoured to possess magical properties, is topped with high, rocky spires. Down below, on a small mound in the middle of the lake, lies a tomb that only a few brave treasure hunters have entered. None are known to have emerged alive.

Thag's Camp

Far from the nearest law enforcement, bandits have set up a settlement in Bower Lake. The leader of this encampment is known as Thag the Impatient. He and his gang have recently taken to kidnapping in order to fund their fledgling criminal empire. While the fate of Thag's victims is unknown, we may hope that the ugliest rumours—of a local slave market—prove unfounded.

Mysterious Tomb

Tucked away near the northeast corner of Bower Lake, this tomb is a mystery to the locals (hence the name). It could be filled with monsters, gold, or any number of curious sights. No one knows for sure, though parents should bear

in mind that children have been known to disappear into its depths.

Bower Lake Demon Door

This door claims to be Albion's greatest playwright. This assertion is not all that bold, as Albion is not known for its great body of dramatic literature; however, it's always good when someone takes an interest in the arts. Even a sentient stone door.

Nightmare Hollow

For decades, Albion mapmakers have struggled to pinpoint this fabled location. Myriad tales in arcane texts state that it lies in Brightwood, but the entrance and exit are never mentioned. Replete with vague references to lurking terrors and a dark spirit that inhabits an ordinary vessel, these stories are dismissed by sensible folk as little more than cautionary tales parents tell their misbehaving children.

Forsaken Fortress

According to local law enforcement, there is a deep and dark enclave within Brightwood that is positively packed with bandits. Needless to say, this fact has put a damper on tourism in the region. (The Brightwood picnic industry has never recovered). Yet, even with the bandits, the occasional Hobbe infestation, and a scant police presence, the area surrounding Forsaken Fortress remains an ideal place for nature-lovers—as long as they are heavily armed.

Farm Cellar

There are stories that, beneath one farm in Brightwood, lies a labyrinth filled with puzzles and the angry undead. Your first challenge is to determine how to make your way past the cellar's entrance, which is locked. Considering the horrors that are said to rest in the cellar's depths, this is probably for the best.

Brightwood Demon Door

When you first come across it, this Demon Door urgently warns you to flee for your life. What danger awaits? A fearsome monster, or the door itself? Or is there in fact any

danger at all? Perhaps not—the situation is not entirely clear. And the Demon Door itself is the most muddled of all.

The Green Mile

This scenic stretch of road connecting Brightwood's forests to Westcliff's coastlines is quite beautiful, which may explain why legions of murderous bandits have chosen to make their encampments there. When you're not fighting off bandit attacks, make a point of enjoying the lush greenery reclaiming ancient stonework along the region's main road. Venture into this region only if you are in a large, armed party or an aspiring Crucible champion looking to get in a few practice beheadings.

The Crucible

Carved out of a mountain that looms over Westcliff is the sporting spectacle known as the Crucible. Aspiring champions risk their lives for a chance at fame in a series of gruelling battles against monsters that beg description, while Crucible commentators Murray and Mad-Dog entertain the fans with their on-the-fly wit and insight. If

you tire of the banter and bloodshed, the encampment around the Crucible is an interesting assemblage of shops and other diversions.

Howling Halls

Travellers making their way to the Crucible encounter this quaint passage on the final leg of their journey. Although a full survey of this route has never been completed, due to the fact that those who attempt a survey tend to disappear without a trace, the Greater Westcliff Society for the Promotion of Tourism offers its assurances that vacationers have nothing to fear in this series of dank, crumbling halls that smell of wet animal fur.

Old Tin Mine

Tucked away in Westcliff is this watery mine said to be filled with bandits who don't welcome intruders. Recently, the following note was found nailed to a nearby tree: "Stay out, or you'll be carrying your head home". The Greater Westcliff Society for the Promotion of Spelunking categorically states that you have nothing to worry about.

Westcliff Demon Door

This talking stone face has inspired hedonists for at least a century. Convinced that there is no reward to be found in the hereafter, it encourages listeners to surrender to the sins of the flesh and live life to its fullest. The door also says that it will allow access to its treasure only when it meets one who truly heeds its words.